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UNCLAS ABUJA 002076

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [NI](#) [POLMIL](#)

SUBJECT: OBASANJO SHELVES PLANS TO ROTATE SERVICE CHIEFS

REF: A. IIR 6 871 0001 5

[1](#)B. ABUJA 2075

[1](#)1. Post reported in ref A that President Obasanjo was planning to replace the military service heads by year's end. A daily newspaper, The Vanguard, reported on December 12 that Obasanjo has shelved those plans and asked the service chiefs to stay on for now. Sources within the Presidency claim the change was the result of the succession squabbles the planned retirement have generated and "the absolute loyalty (the service chiefs) were believed to have shown to the Obasanjo administration."

[1](#)2. Comment. If Obasanjo is concerned about the stability of his regime and the threat of a military coup (ref b), as he (and we) should be, this could be a move to maintain his cadre of loyalists in the military.

CAMPBELL